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Construction Industry News from City Hall

*Superintendent of Central Inspection
Kurt Schroeder*

NOTICE:

Due to budget restraints, the CINCH will no longer be published on a bimonthly basis, however we will try to publish it on a quarterly basis.

ARCHITECTS AND CONTRACTORS

Those of you that have technical questions related to UL hourly rated fire-resistive assemblies, joint systems and through-penetration firestop systems can now call UL Conformity Assessment Services (CAS) at (847)-272-8800, ext. 42364, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., CDT, Monday through Friday. Calls are answered in the order received by the daily Conformity Assessment Services (CAS) representative assigned.

Architects and contractors often propose modifications to a given assembly or system, whether during or after the plan review stage, in order to accommodate many different factors. In some instances, Conformity Assessment Services can easily determine that such modifications would not affect the hourly rating. For example, a contractor may wish to utilize 2" x 6" wood studs when a design specifically calls for 2" x 4" wood studs. Because the size of the studs specified in UL designs are the minimum allowed, anything larger may be utilized without jeopardizing the hourly rating, however, using smaller studs is not permitted. *Note that this, and other important information, is located within the Guide Information for Fire Resistance Ratings (BXUV) at the beginning of the Fire Resistance Directory, Volume 1 (orange book).* Other situations, however may require an engineering evaluation. CAS may need to use UL performance data and other existing knowledge about the product to determine if the assembly or system is still in compliance with the applicable criteria after the modification has been made. In some instances, additional testing may be required. Fees for both engineering evaluations and any necessary testing will be assessed on a per-submittal basis. With the establishment of the telephone service, regulatory officials are being asked to refer architects and contractors to UL's Technical Service "hotline" when modifications to UL hourly rated fire-resistive assemblies, joint systems or through-penetration firestop systems are considered. By verifying modifications through UL before construction, problems in the field such as a "red tag" may become a thing of the past.

For those interested in learning more about fire resistance, UL, in conjunction with B&F Technical Code Services, Inc., of Hoffman Estates, Ill., is offering a new seminar, "Fire-Resistive Construction Requirements." Using a set of architectural drawings for a generic multi-purpose, multi-story building, the course teaches participants how to review such plans for building code compliance, while effectively using UL's Fire Resistance, Roofing Materials and Building Materials Directories. Through the use of UL product directories, participants will be able to verify if architectural assemblies indicated in the plans fulfill the building code requirements for hourly rated assemblies or systems. Current seminar schedules may be accessed through either B&F's web site at www.bftechcs.com or at UL's web site, www.ul.com/frcr.
(Source: The Code Authority, Vol.8 number 1 2000)

Jim Cranford, C.B.O., Building Codes Administrator

BUILDING

SAFE ROOM INSPECTIONS

Many contractors are now offering Safe Rooms as an option on their homes. If you are building reinforced concrete safe rooms, you are required to have both the walls and ceiling/roof/porch slabs inspected after the reinforcing is in place and before pouring the concrete. The safe room walls will normally be inspected at the same time the basement walls are inspected. The ceiling slabs will require that you request 230-Reinforced Slab Inspection.

WALL AND SLAB DETAILS

The "Basement Standards" may be used for the reinforcing schedule for safe room walls. The ceiling/floor slab reinforcing shall be engineered and shall have the engineered drawing on site at the time of inspection or the reinforcing shall be as shown in FEMA's "Taking Shelter From The Storm" manual. These manuals are available in the Office of Central Inspection at no cost while the supply lasts.

NEW INSPECTION TYPES

There have been two new inspection types added to the TELUS system. There has also been one inspection type that changed. They are as follows:

125 - Foundation Repair Only - This is to be used for the initial inspection on foundation repairs. This will allow contractors to request a timed inspection similar to the inspection requests related to other types of concrete inspections.

315 - Braced Wall Line Inspection - This allows the contractor to request an inspection of the sheer walls before the trades are approved and before the exterior wall covering is in place.

236 - Electrical Slab Inspection - This was changed from a 235 because of a conflict in the TELUS system with a 235 also being a building slab inspection type.

STORM WATER POLLUTION PREVENTION

OCI has issued 567 notices to 90 different contractors since enforcement of the city's storm water pollution prevention ordinance went into effect. Each of those notices were sent by certified mail at a total cost of over \$1400. Beginning September 1, 2000 all inspection cards that are issued for projects where the soil will be disturbed will be stamped with the following notice: "1st Notice, BMP's Must Be In Place Before Framing Starts". Thereafter only one certified notice will be sent. If the job site is not brought into compliance on or before the compliance date that is indicated on the certified notice, a citation or a Uniform Criminal Complaint (UCC) will be issued.

Ray Sledge, Construction Inspection Supervisor, Building Section

PLAN REVIEW

If a proposed commercial building is to be located in a Federal Floodplain, the owner, developer and contractor must fill-out a Floodplain Development Permit/Application and submit it to the Office of Central Inspection before any type of permit will be issued to the contractor.

The Floodplain Development Permit/Application can be obtained from the Office of Central Inspection. The City Floodplain Ordinance requires the finish floor of a slab on grade commercial building to be located 1 ft. above the Base Flood Elevation, which can be obtained from the Flood Insurance Rate Map.

A copy of the Flood Insurance Rate Map can be obtained from the Office of Central Inspection, Storm water Utility, or Sedgwick County Building/Zoning Department. If the proposed commercial building is located between elevations, the Office of Central Inspection will use the higher elevation. The contractor can also provide a letter with a licensed Kansas Surveyor seal on it stating an elevation calculated by their firm.

Richard Chamberlin, Plans Examiner

ELECTRIC WATER HEATERS

Q: Does a water heater require a disconnect at the water heater location?

A: Yes. By NEC definition, a water heater is an appliance. Substantiation: 1999 NEC, **Article 100-Definitions:** (Appliance & Utilization Equipment).

Appliance: "Utilization equipment, generally other than industrial, normally built in standardized sizes or types, that is installed or connected as a unit to perform one or more functions such as clothes washing, air conditioning, food mixing, deep frying, etc."

Utilization Equipment: "Equipment that utilizes electric energy for electronic, electromechanical, chemical, heating, lighting, or similar purposes."

Section 422-30 (1999 NEC) requires that all appliances must have disconnecting means. Therefore a disconnecting means is required.

Section 422-31(b) (1999 NEC). This section states---"For permanently connected appliances rated over 300 volt-amperes (or 1/8 hp), the branch-circuit switch or circuit breaker shall be permitted to serve as the disconnecting means where the switch or circuit breaker is within sight from the appliance or is capable of being locked in the open position."

Summary: The City of Wichita (OCI) requires a disconnect adjacent to the water heater location in most installations because the overcurrent disconnecting means (switch, fuse or circuit breaker) is not within sight (and is more than 50 feet) from the water heater, or is not capable of being locked in the open position. Also, if preferred, the water heater could be cord- and plug-connected in some cases (1999 NEC Section 422-32).

Wayne L. Bolen, Construction Inspection Supervisor, Electrical/Elevator section

MECHANICAL & PLUMBING

The Board of Appeals of Air-Conditioning, Refrigeration, Warm-Air Heating and Boilers addressed the problem of propane furnaces in the newly annexed areas that are now in the City of Wichita. The 1997 Uniform Mechanical Code, Section 304.5 prohibits L.P. gas appliances from being installed in a pit, under floor space or a basement. The board decided that any dwelling which currently is supplied with L.P. gas be required to have an audible alarm system installed in accordance with the manufacturer's installations and recommendations. The audible alarm is to detect unburned L.P. gas. This is now a requirement regardless of where the appliance is located.

TRAP PRIMERS

Section 1007.0 of the 1997 Uniform Plumbing Code states: Floor drain or similar traps directly connected to the drainage system and subject to infrequent use shall be provided with an approved automatic means of maintaining their water seals, except where not deemed necessary for safety or sanitation by the Administrative Authority. When automatic trap priming devices are installed, they shall be accessible for maintenance.

ALL CONTRACTORS

If you decide to cancel an inspection that has been scheduled with the TELUS system, you must cancel it with the inspector to make sure that he knows that you are canceling that inspection. A wasted trip is still a re-inspection fee.

RUMORS

If you hear comments or rumors out in the field regarding the Office of Central Inspection, please call us for verification of the subject matter. This could save you time, money or an embarrassing situation.

Dan Leidy, Construction Inspection Supervisor, Plumbing, Mechanical Section

The Office of Central Inspection wants to provide the best service possible. Your opinion is important. Please take time to fill out this survey and return to our office.

1. How often do you use Central Inspection services? _____
2. What type of construction project have you recently been involved where you used the services of OCI?
 Was it: Commercial _____ Residential _____
 Was it a: repair _____ remodel _____ addition _____ new building _____
3. Were you present when the inspector was on site? Yes _____ No _____
4. Was the inspector on time? Yes _____ No _____
5. Rate the inspectors professional manner.
 Excellent _____ Very Good _____ Good _____ Fair _____ Poor _____
6. Rate the inspectors helpfulness.
 Excellent _____ Very Good _____ Good _____ Fair _____ Poor _____
7. Rate the inspectors knowledge of the Code.
 Excellent _____ Very Good _____ Good _____ Fair _____ Poor _____
8. Over-all, how would you rate your experience with our office?
 Excellent _____ Very Good _____ Good _____ Fair _____ Poor _____

OPTIONAL

Your name _____

Inspectors name _____

(Please return to: OCI, 455 N. Main, 7th Floor, Wichita, Kansas 67202 or Fax: 268-4663)



**CITY OF
WICHITA**

www.wichitagov.org



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THE CITY OF WICHITA

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